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the smaller landowners resent the domination of the greater, the peasants are restive under their lords. A small but powerful class of educated young men is growing up which can no longer be satisfied either with the preservation of a closed and unchanging society or with Druzism as a system of belief. These social and intellectual processes are bound to alter the whole basis of the problem in the next generation or two.

10

The district of Latakia includes the mountain-range known as Jebel Ansariyah and the coastal plain at its foot. It is in some sense a natural unit, and the bulk of its population possesses a distinctive character. In 1938 its inhabitants numbered approximately 370,000, of whom 235,000, or roughly 60 per cent, were Alawis, 70,000, or about 20 per cent, Sunnis, 6,000 Isma'ilis, and most of the remainder Christians, mainly Greek Orthodox. In the town and immediate surroundings of Latakia itself, the Sunnis formed the largest single community.

The Alawis are the descendants of the indigenous inhabitants of the district, who have endured a number of conquerors but have managed to preserve their individuality under varying forms. For the greater part of the Ottoman period the district was virtually autonomous while acknowledging the suzerainty of the Sultan; but during the nineteenth century the control of the Ottoman authorities was greatly extended. Local autonomy in practice meant local tyranny by the feudal lords, who were to a large extent Sunnis. This is indeed one of the differences between the situation in Latakia and that in Jebel Druze: whereas in the latter the predominance of the Druzes is unchallenged, in the former the Alawis are in a majority but the Sunnis constitute a large proportion of the landowning class. Moreover both the Sunnis and the Christians are at a higher level of education and political consciousness than the Alawis, who are themselves sub-divided into sects and tribes and possess little communal consciousness.

Making allowances for local differences, what was said about the problem of the Druzes applies also to that of the Alawis. There are some, especially among French officials and missionaries, who believe that the first task is to raise

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they were attached and not as members of the High Commissioner's staff. These Governments had legislative as well as executive powers, subject to the control of the High Commissioner and his Delegates, and within limits of the 'conseillers': a control which at times deprived the Governments of almost all freedom of action.

That the Mandatory Power decided to establish several indigenous Governments instead of one for the whole territory was officially explained as being due to the separatist feelings of various sections of the population and their different levels of development. The first of them to be set up was the State of Greater Lebanon, which was created in August, 1920, by the addition to the pre-war autonomous Sanjaq of the towns and surrounding districts of Beirut, Tripoli, Sur and Saida; the wheat-producing regions of Baalbek and the Biqa'; and the districts of Rashaya and Hasbaya, stretching southwards from the foot of Mount Hermon to the Palestinian frontier. Its independence was proclaimed in September, 1920. In the same month, the Territory of the Alawis was established in the region around Latakia. It was given the name of 'State' in July, 1922. In April, 1922, the independence of Jebel Druze was proclaimed, in consequence of an agreement for the establishment of a Druze national Government, signed in March, 1921, by a number of Druze notables and a representative of the High Commissioner. The remainder of Syria had been divided after the expulsion of Faisal into the two States of Aleppo and Damascus, created in September, 1920. Within the State of Aleppo, the Sanjaq of Alexandretta was given a special régime, in accordance with the Franklin-Bouillon Agreement. Legislatively the Sanjaq formed part of the State, but administratively it possessed a large degree of autonomy, it had a special budget, and Turkish was recognized as an official language side by side with French and Arabic.

This organization was intended to be provisional only. Although in the first instance the personnel of the Governments was appointed by the High Commissioner and many of the most important posts were filled by French officers and officials, it was anticipated that self-governing institutions would be established as soon as possible, and that some permanent and regular system of co-operation between the governments would be created. In 1922, a Representative Council was established in Lebanon. In June of that year a

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further step was taken with the creation of a Syrian Federation which included the States of Damascus, Aleppo and the Alawis, but not those of Greater Lebanon and Jebel Druze. The Federation was given wide legislative powers, exercised through a Federal Council composed of delegations elected by the Representative Councils which were established in the member-states. At its first meeting the Council elected as its President Subhi Barakat, an Antiochene of Turkish origin.

The Federation did not work satisfactorily. The States of Damascus and Aleppo desired a closer form of union, and certain elements in that of the Alawis one less close. In December, 1924, General Weygand, who had succeeded General Gouraud as High Commissioner in April, 1923, dissolved the Federation. As from January, 1925, the two States of Damascus and Aleppo were combined into a single State of Syria, of which the capital was Damascus and within which the Sanjaq of Alexandretta continued to possess a special régime. The State of the Alawis resumed its separate existence without any direct connexion with the new Syrian State.

Thus from the beginning of 1925 onwards the Mandated Territories were divided into four different political units: the State of Greater Lebanon, known later as the Lebanese Republic; the State of Syria, later called the Syrian Republic and including the partly-autonomous Sanjaq of Alexandretta; the State of the Alawis, known from 1930 as the Government of Latakia; and the Government of Jebel Druze. This organization continued unchanged until 1936, when Latakia and Jebel Druze were formally annexed to Syria; in 1939 they were again given almost complete autonomy, but in 1942 were once more attached to the Syrian State.

The judicial system was complex and not altogether satisfactory. Many although by no means all matters of personal status—for example, marriage and divorce—continued to be subject to the jurisdiction of the tribunals of the religious communities. All other matters were subject to the jurisdiction of the civil courts, administering a system of law based partly upon Islamic jurisprudence and partly upon modern European codes. In cases in which only citizens of the Mandated Territories were concerned, the personnel of the courts was almost wholly indigenous. But cases involving citizens of foreign States or their interests were taken before the 'mixed

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independence, and less disposed to establish close relations with Syria and other Arab countries than the latter.[1]

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The State of the Alawis also remained tranquil, once the rising of 1919-1921 had been suppressed. The effort of the Mandatory authorities was directed mainly to encouraging the communal consciousness of the inhabitants (often by playing on their fears); and to raising their material and intellectual level through such measures as the creation of educational and medical services and the giving of assistance to agriculture. In these tasks they had considerable success; socially and economically the district progressed. Further, a greater degree of equality than had previously existed was established between the Alawis, Sunnis and Christians. The administration was mainly in French hands, although there was a Representative Council and efforts were made to increase the share of the inhabitants in the government, as trained and suitable administrators became available. In 1930 an Organic Law was promulgated defining the nature and activities of the political institutions of the State, whose name was then changed to 'the Government of Latakia'.

The Alawis and many of the Christians were content to have no direct connection with the State of Syria, and among the former there developed a more conscious particularist spirit than they had previously possessed. But the Sunnis, here as in Lebanon, disapproved of a situation in which from being the dominant class they became a minority, and accused the Mandatory Power of neglecting their interests in favour of those of the Alawis; they, and all those who held Arab nationalist views, saw clearly the dangers in France's policy of encouraging the separatism of the Alawis and teaching them to rely on foreign support. They demanded the reincorporation of the region in the State of Syria, and their demand was supported by the Sunnis and Arab nationalists in Syria.

6

The history of the other two States was not so tranquil. Alike in Syria and Jebel Druze unrest and discontent appeared in the early years of the Mandate, and issued finally in the revolt of 1925-1926.

[1] For recent changes in Lebanese feeling, see Postscript.

7

In Jebel Druze discontent developed later and more suddenly. The Druzes were not hostile to the Mandatory Power so long as the latter was ruled in its dealings with them by the agreement of 1921. An indigenous administration was established. Salim al-Atrash, a member of the leading family of the Jebel, was chosen as Governor by the Druze notables. His tenure of office was troubled, it is true, but this arose entirely from conflicts inside the Druze community. There were rivalries within the Atrash family; for example, Sultan al-Atrash revolted against his kinsman the Governor. Moreover, there was a growing movement of the smaller landowners against the great families of the Jebel; the Druze feudal organization was beginning to crack.

In 1923, on the death of Salim al-Atrash, the Druze notables elected as Governor a French official, Captain Carbillet. He initiated a policy of administrative and social reforms. They were sincerely intended to improve social conditions in the Jebel, and were carried out with great vigour. But the novelty of his measures, the use of compulsory labour and other harsh methods to execute them, and a lack of tact about Carbillet's way of dealing with opposition, quickly alienated many sections of the population.

Until 1925 there was no open unrest; and there was no contact between Arab nationalist circles in Damascus and the malcontents in Jebel Druze. But in May, 1925, Captain Carbillet went on leave, and the unrest of the Druzes came to the surface in complaints against him and demands for the redress of grievances. These demands were not sympathetically received by General Sarrail, who had succeeded General Weygand as High Commissioner in November, 1924, and who had already aroused widespread hostility by his anti-clericalism, his disrespect for tradition and his clumsy handling of people. He increased the discontent of the Druzes by declaring that in his view the agreement of 1921 had only an historical importance, and he brought it to boiling-point in July, 1925, when on his orders three Druze leaders were lured to Damascus under pretence of receiving their demands, arrested there and sent into enforced residence at Palmyra.

8

In July the Druzes rose in revolt under Sultan al-Atrash. ooo

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The insurrection had many consequences in the Jebel. It prevented any further attempts to interfere with the customs and social structure of the Jebel. Its administration was placed under stricter French control, but its separation from the State of Syria was maintained. The administrative system was formalized by an Organic Law issued in 1930. Under this Law, the region was to be administered by a Governor, appointed by and responsible to the High Commissioner, and possessed of considerable legislative and financial as well as executive powers. In practice he was always a Frenchman. He was to be assisted by a Council of Government, composed partly of heads of administrative departments and partly of appointed members chosen from among the notables. All important acts of the Government would require the approval of the High Commissioner, who was also to exercise such sovereign powers as did not belong to the local Government.[1]

The administration of the Jebel followed a policy the effect of which, whether deliberate or not, was to drive a wedge between the Druzes and the Arab nationalists, whose temporary alliance had given the revolt of 1925 its strength. The separatist spirit so deeply grounded in Druze tradition was encouraged, and there was grafted on to it among a certain section a feeling of dependence upon France. There remained, however, another section who wished for union with Syria.

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In the State of Syria, the process of pacification was accompanied by one of political change, with the aim of improving the state of feeling and removing some of the grievances of the nationalists: grievances which had been partly endorsed by the Permanent Mandates Commission at its special session to investigate the revolt, held at Rome in February-March, 1926. The change was initiated by M. Henri de Jouvenel, who replaced General Sarrail in November, 1925. He took the first steps which were designed to lead ultimately to self-government. In Lebanon he allowed the Representative Council to draft a Constitution for the State; in the State of the Alawis he held elections for a Constituent Council to draft an Organic Law; and in the State of Syria he ordered elections for

[1] For text, see Dareste, *Les Constitutions Modernes*, V, pp. 694-7.

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria MD1 Lebanon MD1

before 1914; and was it not ridiculous, as well as expensive, for so small a region to have so grandiose and complex a constitution?

As a further consequence, the movement of discontent with sectarianism was greatly strengthened, and many Lebanese, especially among the young, began to look for an alternative. At one extreme the 'Phalanges Libanaises', the party of Lebanese nationalism, received much support. So too did the 'Syrian National Party', with its doctrine of the total separation of Church and State; while the Arab Nationalists pointed to the failure of the constitutional system as a proof, if one were needed, that an independent Lebanon was too divided, artificial and unstable to exist by itself.

4

In Syria, the first steps towards the execution of the Treaty were taken immediately after the return of the Syrian delegation from Paris. Arrangements were made for the holding of Parliamentary elections; the Chamber was to consist of 86 members, 16 of them representing the religious minorities and 7 the Beduin tribes. The elections, which took place in November, 1936, resulted in an overwhelming majority for the candidates of the National Bloc; and when the Chamber met, on December 21st, its first important act was to choose Faris al-Khuri as its President, and its second to accept the resignation of Muhammad Ali al-Abid from the Presidency of the Republic and to elect Hashim al-Atasi in his place. The Ayyubi Ministry having resigned, the President entrusted the formation of a new one to Jamil Mardam Bey. All the members of his Ministry were drawn from the National Bloc.

This Ministry found no difficulty in securing the confidence of the Chamber, which unanimously approved the Treaty in December, 1936. It was formally signed by the High Commissioner and the members of the Ministry on December 22nd.

In the same month, after consultations with notables of the districts of Jebel Druze and Latakia, their annexation to the Syrian State was proclaimed. This proclamation was accompanied by special Statutes granting a measure of administrative autonomy to the two regions. Despite protests from separatist groups against the concept of a unitary Syria, the régime envisaged in these Statutes was inaugurated by the appointment in January, 1937, of two prominent members of the

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631 National Bloc, Mazhar Raslan as Governor of Latakia and Nasib al-Bakri as Governor of Jebel Druze.

648 642 Although the Treaty had not yet been ratified by the French Parliament, it was agreed that the transitional period should be regarded as starting on January 1st, 1937. A beginning was made with the transfer to the Syrian Government of functions hitherto exercised by the French authorities. The Government was given the right freely to prepare and carry out its budget, and a certain control over the police; in principle the High Commissioner ceased to exercise his right to veto legislation, and the 'conseillers' to control ministerial acts. But the Mandatory Power still retained the conduct of foreign relations, the ultimate responsibility for public order and certain administrative services such as the supervision of the Beduin tribes.

665 186 These events seemed to show that the policy of the Bloc was successful. It was still united; it had an overwhelming majority in the Chamber; its adherents filled the offices of the Government; it commanded a large measure of support in the country, especially among the younger generation.

Opposition to the Bloc existed, but it was so far largely inarticulate and undirected. It consisted of a handful of Deputies; of some extreme Arab nationalist organizations, which refused to recognize the Mandate and regarded co-operation with the French as treason; and of the separatist movements among the Alawis and Druzes and in the Jazirah.

The hopes of Syrian independence reached their climax in the celebrations which marked the return to Syria of the newly-amnestied exiles, Dr. Shahbandar and Sultan al-Atrash in May, 1937, the Amir Shakib Arslan and Ihsan al-Jabiri in June. It seemed as if the country were entering upon a new period of national construction under leaders whose patriotic energy had only been strengthened by disappointment, imprisonment, and long years of exile.

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648 The next two years saw the collapse of these hopes. The claims of Turkey to Alexandretta, the growth of separatist movements, the failure of the French Government to secure the ratification of the Treaty, the unrest caused by the disturbances in Palestine, the administrative failure of the Nationalist Government and finally the growth of an internal

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between Turkey and France, including an engagement by France not to alienate her rights in Syria to any third Power. Simultaneously, the agreement for the cession of the Hatay was signed in Ankara, Turkey recognizing the inviolable nature of her frontier with Syria, and promising not to interfere in any way in the affairs of Syria, by propaganda or by any other means.[1]

One month later, the last French troops having left the Hatay, it was finally assimilated to Turkey, becoming Vilayet No. 63 of the Turkish State.

In Syria the cession aroused protests and disturbances. The indignation which these expressed was not so spontaneous as it had been in previous years, because the cession had been so long expected and took no one by surprise; but it was no less real for that.

8

The union of Jebel Druze and the Alawi Territory with Syria, which was agreed upon when the Franco-Syrian Treaty of 1936 was concluded, was effected by decree in December of the same year. Each was to possess a special administrative and financial régime, but otherwise was to be subject to the constitution and laws of the Syrian State. This new system was to come fully into force with the ratification of the Treaty. The statute defining the special régime for each of the districts provided for the appointment of the Governor by the President of the Republic, of other officials in part by the President and in part by the Governor. The latter was to have the power of issuing ordinances, and was to be assisted by an administrative council with an elected majority. Each district was to have its special budget, but was also to make an annual contribution to the State of Syria.[2] Subsequent decrees provided for the representation of the two districts in the Syrian Chamber: Jebel Druze by five Deputies (three Druzes, one Christian and one Beduin), and the Alawi district by 16 (ten representing the Alawis and six the other communities).

In addition to these administrative privileges, a further guarantee for the good treatment of the two districts was contained in the military convention attached to the Treaty of 1936. It provided for the maintenance of French troops in

[1] See Appendix Ag. [2] See Appendix Ar.

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631 both districts for a period of five years from the coming into force of the Treaty.

631 The Treaty and the new régime were received with approval by a number of the Druzes and Alawis; even former autonomists expressed their loyalty to the Syrian Government. This reaction, however, was transient and deceptive. In Jebel Druze discord began to arise early in 1937, after the appointment of Nasib al-Bakri, a Damascene Moslem, as first Governor of the province. A powerful party demanded the appointment of a Druze notable, Hasan al-Atrash, and also a large measure of autonomy; the nationalists asserted that it was encouraged to go to extremes by local French officials. There were also, however, many Druzes who supported the nationalist Government and the Governor whom it had appointed. Attempts were made with no more than a temporary success to reconcile the advocates of separatism with those of unity. The disturbances were not ended until the Governor resigned and was replaced after an interval by Hasan al-Atrash. By the end of 1937 the Jebel was quiet enough to enable Parliamentary elections to be held. The calm continued throughout 1938, but at the beginning of 1939 disturbances began once more. The separatist group accused the Syrian Government of bad faith, expelled Syrian officials from the province and declared the independence of Jebel Druze under the protection of France.

A similar process had meanwhile been occurring in the Alawi district, which was known under the new régime as the Province of Latakia. Here, as in Jebel Druze, there was tranquillity at first, and Parliamentary elections were held in 1937. But the calm was short-lived. The Alawi notables protested against the appointment of Syrian Moslem officials, and more especially of nationalist Governors, first Mazhar Raslan from Homs and then Ihsan al-Jabiri, a Sunni Moslem from Aleppo. The nationalist policy of assimilation was perhaps carried out hastily and tactlessly, the Governor alienated large sections of the population, and at the beginning of 1939 armed bands rose in revolt under the leadership of the deputy Sulaiman Murshid, a brigand who had proclaimed himself 'God' and had secured considerable local influence with the help of certain French officials. At about the same time the visit of the High Commissioner, M. Puaux, was made the occasion for demonstrations in favour of autonomy. Soon

afterwards the Governor found his position impossible and was compelled to abandon it. He was not replaced, his powers being assumed in July by the High Commissioner's Delegate.

9

The Franco-Syrian Treaty of 1936 effected no formal change in the status of the Jazirah, but its signature was followed by the replacement of the French officials who had ruled it until then, by Syrian administrators. Here as in Jebel Druze and the Alawi region discontent soon showed itself. There were some who felt and expressed loyalty to the new national Government. But there was an important element which demanded that the ties between the Jazirah and the central Government in Damascus should be as loose as possible, or should be severed altogether. Their minimum demand was that the local officials should be chosen from among the local population; their maximum, for complete separation from Syria. Their discontent was increased by the lack of wisdom shown by some of the more irresponsible nationalists, although the Government itself acted on the whole in a conciliatory manner. The autonomists appear to have been encouraged by certain of the local French officials; the nationalists claimed, indeed, that here as among the Alawis and Druzes the minorities would have acquiesced in their rule had it not been for the activities of French agents. The separatists were themselves divided on everything except their dislike of being ruled by the nationalists of Damascus. Some were Kurds, who objected mainly to being ruled by Arabs; others Christians, who objected also to being ruled by Moslems. These two groups sometimes but not always acted together during the years from 1936 to 1939.

Serious trouble first broke out in June, 1937, when the Kurds of Hassetche revolted against the appointment of nationalist officials from outside the Jazirah. The rising was quelled with the aid of the French military authorities, but it was soon taken up in Qamishli and elsewhere by the Christians, who demanded a special statute similar to that of Alexandretta, an administration which would give equal weight to the rights of all sects and races, and the withdrawal from the province of officials who had not been chosen from the local population.

669 563 621 The disturbances reached their height in August, when a number of Christians in Amudah were killed in an altercation with a group of Kurds instigated by a Kurdish chieftain who supported the nationalist Government. The intervention of French troops and the removal of certain unpopular officials restored order for a time. But beneath the surface discontent continued, and the separatists began to form themselves into societies for the defence of their rights, with a central committee to co-ordinate their activities. In December, 1937, some separatists from Hassetche kidnapped the Governor of the Jazirah, Tawfiq Shamiyyah, a Greek Orthodox Christian from Damascus; he was released after a few days, and his kidnappers were arrested.

The Governor was shortly afterwards replaced by a new one, a Moslem, who made a conciliatory statement of policy. It did not, however, appease the separatists. They demanded the release of those who had been arrested for kidnapping the former Governor, and also the dismissal of certain officials. When the new Governor failed to persuade the Syrian Government to yield to these demands, he was chased from the province. The separatists then drove out other nationalist officials, boycotted the administration and reaffirmed their demand for a separate government under French control.

While these events were occurring in the Jazirah, the separatist case was being urged in Paris and Rome by Cardinal Tappouni, the head of the Syrian Catholic Church, who had constituted himself the spokesman of those Christian minorities who were opposed to nationalist rule. In a memorandum submitted to the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs in November, 1937, he spoke of the possibility of a massacre of the Christians in the Jazirah and elsewhere, and made various proposals for avoiding it: that the religious communities should be given complete equality in religious and personal matters; that an equitable number of Christian officials should be appointed; that the Syrian Government should maintain, in districts where the Christians might be menaced, adequate means for their protection; and that a régime of decentralization should be introduced, such as to safeguard the interests of the minorities. The French Government, which was then negotiating with the Syrian Prime Minister in order to obtain more explicit guarantees, replied in a vague and conciliatory fashion.

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The situation remained as it was until the beginning of 1939, when agitation for the release of the kidnappers of the former Governor occurred. In June organized manifestations on a large scale took place in all the towns of the province; but the French authorities intervened and restored order.

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No sooner had the Franco-Syrian Treaty been signed than criticism of it began to appear in France. In part this criticism came from those who opposed the whole idea of a treaty, believing the Syrians to be still unfit for self-government. Others, while admitting a treaty of some sort to be desirable, were doubtful of the adequacy of the existing Treaty: because it aimed at creating a unitary State in a country so divided as Syria; or because its guarantees for minorities and its provisions for the maintenance of French military forces upon Syrian soil were insufficient; or else because it did not stipulate for the repayment to France of the expenses incurred in the administration of the Mandate.

These doubts were reinforced by the events of 1937: the Alexandretta question, and the growth of the separatist movements in Jebel Druze, the province of Latakia and the Jazirah. It was obvious that the French Chamber and Senate would only ratify the Treaty provided that they were reassured on these and certain other points. The Syrian Prime Minister therefore went to Paris in order to negotiate with the French Government an agreement upon the points at issue. He left Syria in November, 1937, and returned towards the end of December. The result of his visit was an exchange of letters between him and M. de Tessan, Under-Secretary of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, dated December 11th, 1937. The letters included a further guarantee by the Syrian Government of its intention to respect all the rights granted by the Treaty to the minorities living under its sway; and an undertaking by the Government to accept the technical experts recommended to it by the French Government. The letters closed with a statement of the desire of both parties to continue the policy of co-operation.[1]

These undertakings were accepted by nationalist opinion as being inevitable in the circumstances, and ratification of the Treaty was eagerly awaited. In March, 1938, indeed, Mardam

[1] See Appendix A4.

suspension of the Constitution and the complete breakdown of the policy of 1936.

II

The Bloc was the more incapable of weathering such a crisis, because by now there had appeared a strong nationalist opposition to it. Already in 1936 such a potential opposition had existed ready to take shape so soon as, on the one hand, the Bloc disappointed hopes, and on the other an alternative leader or group of leaders appeared. At the time neither of the two conditions was fulfilled. The Bloc was at the height of its success; and the few Deputies who opposed it were neither prominent nor strong enough to become popular leaders.

During the next few years, however, matters changed. The Bloc gradually lost a great part of its popularity, on account of its failure to secure the ratification of the Treaty and its impotence in the face of Turkish designs upon Alexandretta. The natural tendency of Governments in office to disappoint individual hopes and create individual grievances worked in the same direction.

The discontent was increased by the comparative failure of the Government in internal administration. Among the causes of failure were the inadequate powers of the Government, the widespread belief that it did not enjoy the backing of the French authorities, its own lack of experience and the absence of an efficient civil service; but it was nevertheless discouraging to its supporters and irritating to ordinary citizens. On the whole the departments were no better administered than they had been; and there was a succession of petty acts of discrimination against members of minorities. The relations between the central and local authorities were often difficult, the tendency to excessive centralization conflicting with the innate localism of some of the provinces. This conflict had indeed existed before the nationalists came to power, and in order to end it, the High Commissioner had issued a decree on provincial organization in January, 1936. Besides altering the number and boundaries of the provinces, this decree had defined the scope of the central and local authorities and provided for the establishment of provincial councils. In spite of declarations, this decree was never fully applied.

618 reach an agreement with Syria on the basis of the 1936 Treaty with the amendments of November, 1938, but that due satisfaction must be given to the legitimate aspirations of the minorities. Moreover, the international situation necessitated new military arrangements between Syria and France. He ended with an appeal for the maintenance of law and order.

The nationalists saw in this statement a determination to strengthen France's hold over Syria in preparation for the imminent world war. The last hope of the ratification of the Treaty was now extinguished.

648 On May 15th the Bukhari Ministry resigned. On May
645 23rd the Syrian Chamber voted unanimously an order of the day, affirming Syria's sympathy for French democracy in the hour of its peril, but at the same time emphasizing its attachment to the unamended Treaty of 1936 as the only firm basis for Franco-Syrian co-operation.

This time there was no way out of the deadlock. All attempts to form a new Ministry failed. Finally, the President of the Republic resigned (July 7th). A few days later M. Puaux took the extreme step of dissolving the Chamber, suspending the Constitution, and appointing a non-political Council of Directors to govern by decree-laws under his own direction (July 10th). The Council was composed of permanent officials, with Bahij al-Khatib as its President.

14

● 631 At the same time the High Commissioner issued decrees
648 re-establishing in Jebel Druze and the Territory of Latakia separate administrations similar to those which had existed until 1936, and providing for the special administration of the Jazirah.

The decree for Latakia stated that the Organic Law promulgated in 1936 was to be replaced by a new one, to come into force immediately. The new law provided for the government of the region by a Governor, assisted by a council of heads of departments and by the Council of the Territory. He was to be appointed by the head of the Syrian State on the nomination of the Council of the Territory, was to hold office for five years and might be re-appointed. His powers were executive, financial and within limits legislative. The Council was to consist of at least seventeen elected members, to hold two ordinary sessions a year and to discuss financial and

11: Hourani S-4 (no date) 1946 MD1 Syria 401

other matters, without, however, possessing much power of independent decision. The Territory was to enjoy financial autonomy, apart from a contribution to the expenses of general administration of the State of Syria. It was also to have judicial autonomy, except for the provisions that the Presidents of the High Court and the Court of First Instance at Latakia, both of them French magistrates, were to be appointed by the head of the Syrian State on the nomination of the French Government; and that conflicts of competence between the Courts of the Territory and those of other parts of the French Mandated area were to be decided by the Court of Cassation at Damascus.

The provisions of the decree relating to the Jebel Druze were virtually the same, with a few minor variations. That for the Jazirah removed the province from the control of the Syrian Government, and placed it under the direct rule of the High Commissioner's Delegate at Hassetche. (This measure was enough to end the disturbances. By December, 1940, life in the Jazirah had returned to normal, and it was possible for an agreement to be reached between the Mandatory authorities and the Syrian Government, under the terms of which the functions of Governor were once more transferred from the High Commissioner's Delegate to a Syrian official.)[1]

[1] See Appendix A6.

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Thus, in October the Ministry of Saadullah al-Jabiri in Syria was replaced by that of Faris al-Khuri, who had previously been President of the Chamber; the change was made for internal political reasons, and the new Government was composed largely of the same Ministers and followed the same general policy as its predecessor. In April, 1945, the Ministry was reconstructed. In Lebanon, too, there was a ministerial change: in January, 1945, the Government of Riyadh as-Sulh was replaced by that of Abdul-Hamid al-Karami, a Sunni Moslem deputy from Tripoli.

A change affecting the structure of the Syrian Republic took place in September, with the incorporation of the province of Jebel Druze fully in the Syrian State. It had already been formally incorporated in February, 1942, but had preserved a special administrative and financial régime which was now abolished. This step was taken at the request of the Administrative Council of Jebel Druze. A similar step was not taken in the Alawi province; although there was a party in favour of it, the forces of separatism were still strong, and the situation was complicated by the existence of disorder and unrest fomented by Sulaiman Murshid and his associates.

Other changes of greater importance, because they affected more immediately the problem of Franco-Lebanese and Franco-Syrian relations, were the transfer of power to the Syrian and Lebanese Governments and the financial agreement of February, 1944:

(i) In accordance with the agreement made by General Catroux with the two Governments on December 22nd, 1943, a series of particular agreements was negotiated during 1944, and by the end of the year almost all the services in question had been formally handed over, including the Customs Administration, the Financial and Economic Services, the control of the tobacco monopoly and concessionary companies, the Press Censorship, the Beduin control and the 'Sûreté Générale' (although a French 'Sûreté aux Armées' was retained). These transfers gave the two Governments almost all the attributes of independent governments. At the end of 1944 the only important attribute which had not been transferred was the control of the local levies, the 'Troupes Spéciales'.

14:International Bank S-5 (1954) 1955 MD1 Syria MD1

rainfall is supplemented by the water brought down from the mountains by its rivers. The principal of these is the Euphrates which has its headwaters in Turkey and flows in a generally southeasterly direction across Syria into Iraq. Together with its most important tributary, the Khabour, which also rises in Turkey, it accounts for 90% of the total annual flow of all Syrian rivers. In the west the largest river is the Orontes which is fed by springs from the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon ranges and flows northward through the marshy area known as the Ghab into Turkey. Farther south the Barada river, rising in the Anti-Lebanon, supplies life-giving water to the fertile Ghouta oasis around Damascus. In the extreme south the Yarmuk river flows along the Jordanian frontier into the Jordan river. Although the flow of these rivers is highly seasonal, it is on the effective utilization of their waters that much of the future development of Syria's agriculture depends.

Principal Regions

Administratively Syria is divided into nine *mohafazats* or provinces, each in charge of a *mohafez* or governor; the province is in turn divided into *qadas* or counties headed by a *kaimakam;* and the county is further subdivided into *nahiyes* or townships in charge of a *mudir*.

Of greater significance, however, are the principal economic regions. Farthest south are the adjoining regions of the Hauran and Djebel Druze. The Hauran plain, an area of rather high but apparently declining fertility, has long been known as a granary, even in Roman times. Its principal crop is wheat, but barley, maize, sorghum and pulses are also important. To the east rises the Djebel Druze, a basaltic dome, where the Druzes, a proud and independent people, eke a bare living from the pockets of fertile soil in their mountains. Here the pressure of population on the land is acute. Agricultural holdings in the Hauran and Djebel Druze are predominantly small. There is little irrigation, and annual rainfall, averaging less than 12 inches, is barely adequate for dry farming. Sharp fluctuations in rainfall frequently make farming precarious. One of the principal problems of this region is the scant supply of underground water even for drinking.

To the northwest of the Hauran lies the higher, rolling Julani plateau stretching toward the Hermon range. This stony region is suitable only for grazing and, to some extent, for orchards. To the north a narrow band

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foundations for commercial and intellectual progress were less firmly established than in Lebanon, and the Muslim leaders of the political parties were given little opportunity to acquire the technique of government. The root of the trouble was that the French were opposed to self-government and tended to refuse office to nationalist political leaders, except for short, self-defeating periods. But though they failed to foster self-government, the French did much good in both Syria and Lebanon as engineers, doctors, educators, and archaeologists, and performed a valuable service in training at least a cadre of competent civil servants.

With the end of the French Mandate there emerged two sovereign and independent Republics with many mutual and some conflicting interests. For some years the rest of the world failed to distinguish between the two, and it is still possible to find educated persons who suppose that Beirut is the capital of Syria. Syria and Lebanon are, to some extent, mutually dependent or complementary, but they are distinct and their political development will be considered separately.

Government and Politics

(*a*) Syria

Under her constitution Syria is a Republic in which the legislative power is in the hands of a Chamber of Deputies numbering 114 members in 1949. The deputies are elected by direct suffrage granted to all men and to women of a certain educational standard. The representation of religious minorities is shown in the table on p. 466 above. The President of the Republic must be a Muslim and is elected for a term of five years by the Parliament; he nominates the Prime Minister who appoints his cabinet ministers. The Parliament is elected for four years but may be dissolved by the President. The constitution was suspended in 1952 by the military dictatorship and a new one on the Presidential model adopted in July 1953.

Damascus is the seat of government and there are ten provinces, each under a Governor who is assisted by a staff of civil servants representing most of the ministries. The provinces (*muhafaza*) are divided in *qazas*, each under a *qaimaqam*, who is a civil servant under the Ministry of Interior; the *qazas* are divided into *nahiyas* under *mudirs*. Within a *nahiya* may be several villages, each of which is rather loosely under the control of the *mukhtar* who may be elected by the village or appointed by the ministry. The judiciary are independent of the legislature and

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religion of his father in certain cases in which the two parents belonged to different sects, whereas the Shariah required him to follow the religion of his Moslem parent. 641 563

The Ulema presented a memorandum to the Nationalist Government of Jamil Mardam Bey, setting forth these and other theological objections and protesting against the decree. The Government was sympathetic to them, not only because of its desire to keep on good terms with orthodox Islam, but also because of the political circumstances of the moment. Franco-Syrian relations were strained, owing to the failure of the French Government to secure the ratification of the Treaty of 1936. The Syrian Ministry resented the way in which the decree had been issued by the High Commissioner, over its own head and that of the Chamber. When the Ulema presented their memorandum to the Prime Minister, he replied that his Government was not willing to accept the decree, and soon afterwards the Minister of Justice issued instructions to the Courts not to apply it.

Shortly afterwards, for this and other reasons, the Government resigned. The High Commissioner had triumphed on the constitutional question. Subsequently, however, in view of the passions which the decree had aroused, he issued a new one excluding Moslems from the application of the laws of 1936 and 1938. No further step to regularize the situation has been taken since then.

Divisions of the Country 631 ●

The figures given in the first section show that there are three districts of Syria in which the Arab Sunnis do not possess a majority: they are Jebel Druze, where the Druzes are in the majority, Latakia, with a majority of Alawis, and the Jazirah, which is divided between Kurds, Arab Moslems and Christians of different kinds. It will be convenient to describe each of these districts separately before dealing with the remainder of the country. 563

Jebel Druze

Jebel Druze was settled in the course of the nineteenth century by Druzes coming from Lebanon in order to escape Turkish government, military service, foreign interference, Christian rivalry and in general all restrictions upon their liberty to follow 563

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563 L68 but they claim autonomy in the Jazirah or at least the right to live as Kurds, immune from attempts to force them to assimilate.

French Policy

648 563 France's hostility to Arab nationalism led her to show special favour to the minorities in Syria. This policy revealed itself in numerous administrative acts, and in such military acts as the recruitment of special detachments from Circassians, Kurds and other minorities, but it is most clearly shown and has had the most important consequences in regard to the two compact minorities, the Druzes and Alawis.

648 563 631 In 1921 an agreement was concluded between the French authorities and some of the Druze leaders, providing for a national government assisted by French advisers. From this time until 1936 there existed a 'Government of Jebel Druze' independent of Syria and under all-pervasive French control. At first, French policy ran counter to local susceptibilities, and this led to the Druze Revolt of 1925, which became a Syrian national revolt. After the suppression of the revolt, the same system was continued, and was formalized by the Organic Law of 1930. Its effect was to encourage the particularist feeling of the Druzes and to arouse among certain of them a feeling of gratitude to France.

Another autonomous territory was created in the 'Territory' or 'Government' of the Alawis, set up in 1920. It possessed an administrative system similar to that of Jebel Druze, formalized in a similar organic law issued in 1930, and under a still stricter French control. The administration did something to improve the very backward condition of the Alawis and to arouse among them a corporate self-consciousness and a feeling of attachment to France. In general, the district was peaceful after unrest at the beginning; the only disturbances came from the Sunnis and Greek Orthodox, who believed their interests were being neglected and demanded the attachment of the district to Syria.

Nationalism and the Minorities

563 668 The leaders of Arab nationalism in Syria recognize the importance of the minority problem and have made considerable efforts to win the confidence of the minorities. In principle they regard Arab Christians as on a level with Moslems inside the Arab community, once they are willing to accept their obligations as

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members of the Arab nation. As for the linguistic minorities, they insist on a certain degree of assimilation, but there is no question of treating them as inferiors because of their racial origins.

They are opposed, however, to the grant of a special regime to minorities, since it would only perpetuate their difference; and even more strongly would they oppose any foreign intervention or influence in support of the minorities. In regard to the compact minorities, while they recognize the need for careful and tactful administration, they believe they are capable of giving such administration, and wholly reject the claims of the autonomists, both because the grant of autonomy would play into the hands of foreign powers eager to intervene, and because, so long as they remained autonomous, the minorities would never learn how to live with their fellow-nationals.

The Treaty of 1936 *and the Minorities*

The autonomy of Jebel Druze and the Alawis was brought to an end by the Franco-Syrian Treaty of 1936. In December of that year decrees were issued annexing the two Governments to the Syrian Republic as the Provinces of Jebel Druze and Latakia respectively. Certain safeguards were, however, provided for the special position of the two provinces. On the one hand, they were given a special administration and financial regime. On the other, the military convention attached to the Treaty stipulated for the maintenance of French troops in both districts for a period of five years from the coming into force of the Treaty.

At the same time, the administration of the Jazirah was placed under the control of the Government of Damascus; it had never been formally autonomous but in practice had been under direct French administration since the establishment of civil government there.

In each of these three districts there was a group which welcomed the union with Syria, and others who thought it in their interest to side with the nationalists who seemed to be the rising power. Others again did not object to incorporation in Syria, so long as the special position of the provinces was respected and they were fairly treated in such matters as government appointments. There were some, however, who desired to return to complete autonomy under French protection. From 1937

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and a section of the Armenians, were able to maintain good relations with the Government. In general, what troubles occurred were no more than were inevitable in a period of transition.

Developments since 1941

In September 1941, General Catroux proclaimed the independence of Syria. His proclamation contained the following statement about minorities:

> Free France considers that the State of Syria forms politically and territorially an indivisible unity, of which the integrity ought to be preserved against any dismemberment. In consequence she will look with favour upon the strengthening of the political, cultural, and economic links which unite the different portions of Syria. To this end, the Delegate-General and Plenipotentiary of Free France will revise the texts defining the particular status formerly accorded to certain regions, in such a way that, while the administrative and financial autonomy to which they show themselves firmly attached is preserved, they shall be politically subordinated to the Syrian central power. Thus the principle of Syrian unity and the particular aspirations of these regions will be reconciled.
>
> It remains understood, moreover, that the guarantees of public right set out in the organic statutes in favour of individuals and of communities will be maintained and given full effect.[1]

In accordance with these principles, the two autonomous territories were re-attached to the rest of Syria. Thus, the first Government formed after the proclamation contained a Druze and an Alawi Minister; and in February 1942, the two provinces were once more formally annexed to Syria, with provisions for a special administrative and financial regime. In September 1944 the Administrative Council of Jebel Druze voted unanimously for the abrogation of its special regime and complete incorporation in the Syrian State.

In the summer of 1943, elections were held and subsequently a nationalist government took office. As formerly, the Chamber contained representatives of the minorities and the Cabinet a Christian minister. The Government made clear its intention of treating all members of the community on a footing of complete

[1] General Catroux's Proclamation of Syrian Independence, September 28, 1941. *Journal Officiel de la France Libre* (London), Première année, No. 13, December 9, 1941.

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shall propose to this Council the nomination, promotion, transfer, dismissal of judges and disciplinary measures to be taken against any of them when necessary in accordance with law. The Council shall decide on such proposals by a vote to be taken by its absolute majority.

(2) The President shall draft and sign decrees upon decisions taken by the Supreme Judicial Council, and refer such decrees to the Minister of Justice in accordance with the stipulations of Article 80 hereof.

Art. 125. The Supreme Judicial Council shall propose bills concerning the immunity of judges, the procedure for their appointment, promotion, transfer, dismissal and disciplinary measures against them.

Chapter VI

Administrative Divisions

Art. 126. The Republic of Syria shall be divided into Muhafazats; their number, sub-divisions and boundaries shall be determined by a law.

Art. 127. Laws shall be based on the principle of decentralization for heads of administrative units and chiefs of departments in the Capital and in the Muhafazats.

Art. 128. (1) There shall be established a Council in each Muhafazat; three-quarters of its members shall be elected and the other quarter shall be appointed.

(2) The term of the Council, the number and eligibility of its members, and its electoral procedure shall be determined by law.

(3) The Muhafazat Council shall elect its President and an Executive Secretariat whose term of office, powers and procedure shall be determined by law.

Art. 129. The main tasks of the Muhafazat Council shall be to contribute towards promoting the following objectives:

(1) To fight disease by expanding free medical care and by protecting motherhood and childhood.

(2) To combat ignorance by establishing nurseries, primary, elementary and vocational schools, by teaching illiterates and by promoting education.

(3) To secure potable waters in villages and cities. To open local roads and to spread the use of electricity.

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(4) To define the limits of municipal districts in the Muhafazats. 642 631

(5) To institute and organize exhibitions.

(6) To encourage tourism, summer resorts and to supervise hotels.

(7) To organize local communications.

(8) To utilize mineral waters.

(9) To promote a forestation and planting of trees.

(10) To protect beneficiary works and contribute to them.

(11) To organize and exploit hunting and fishing in the sea and rivers.

Art. 130. (1) The special revenues of the Muhafazat necessary for the implementation of its projects shall consist of—

(a) A percentage to be determined by law, such percentage to be taken from general taxes collected in the Muhafazat or added thereto.

(b) Local duties which the Muhafazat Council shall impose within the limits of law. These duties shall in no way delay the movement of persons or the transfer of capital between the various Muhafazats and shall not restrict the right of citizens to practice their professions and perform their work in the country.

(2) The special accountability of the Councils of the Muhafazats shall be regulated by a law.

Art. 131. The Muhafazat Council shall determine disbursements in questions falling under its jurisdiction.

Art. 132. The Rules of Procedure for the Councils of the Muhafazats, adoption of decisions and supervision of their actions shall be determined by law.

CHAPTER VII

FINANCES

Art. 133. (1) The Government shall prepare the general budget. 642

(2) The Chamber of Deputies alone shall have the right to adopt it. 652

Art. 134. (1) There shall be for each fiscal year one general budget containing the receipts and expenditures. No special, independent or additional budget may be created except by virtue of a law.